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PROGRAMME PLANNING: COUNTRY AND INTERCOUNTRY PROGRAMMES AND PROJECTS

FIFTH COUNTRY PROGRAMME FOR UNITED ARAB EMIRATES

Note by the Administrator

I. PREPARATORY PROCESS

1. There has been a regular dialogue between officials of the United Arab Emirates (UAE) and the Resident Representative of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) on the implementation of the fourth country programme, as well as the direction of the fifth country programme. Also, a high-level consultation took place in October 1991 between UNDP and authorities in connection with Governing Council decision 91/29 on United Arab Emirates net contributor country status, which determined the scope, mode and parameters of future cooperation.

2. Technical cooperation needs under the fifth country programme have also been assessed by missions sent to the United Arab Emirates in 1991 by the Department of Technical Cooperation for Development (DTCD), the United Nations Centre for Human Settlements (Habitat) (UNHCR), the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD), the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), the International Labour Organisation (ILO), the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), the World Bank, the International Maritime Organization (IMO), the International Telecommunication Union (ITU), and the United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO). The UNDP advisory note also served as a basis for the preparation of the fifth country programme.

II. ANALYTICAL COMMENTARY ON THE COUNTRY PROGRAMME

3. The UAE is a federation comprising seven Emirates, namely: Abu Dhabi, Dubai, Sharjah, Ajman, Umm-Al-Quwain, Ras Al-Khaimah and Fujeirah, each of which is at a different level of development. The country has witnessed

rapid economic and social progress during the last two decades, emanating from the accumulation of considerable oil revenues. The country's main development objective is to achieve sustained economic growth accompanied by a balanced development that would improve the standard of living in the less-advantaged Emirates. Another important objective is to diversify the economy to make it less dependent on oil revenues. The country's development is also dependent on an expatriate labour force, thus highlighting the need to develop national skills.

4. The country programme is based on the broad Government development objectives, as well as on the UNDP experience during the previous country programme. The programme, which is based on a decentralized system of administration, developed in such a way as to meet the local needs of the individual Emirates. Certain themes have emerged in such areas as regional development planning, management of municipal services and computer-based information systems. However, in the absence of a national development plan, it was felt that UNDP could contribute more effectively to alleviating the development problems of the federation, if it were to be involved more at the policy levels.

5. The following areas of concentration were therefore identified for the fifth country programme:

(a) Economic planning and management. Technical cooperation activities in this field to assist in developing a national development strategy and enhance coordination between the federal Government and individual Emirates;

(b) Economic diversification. Technical cooperation activities in this field to assist in developing institutional capabilities and policies for accelerated diversification;

(c) Efficient management of public utilities. While most of the services in the country are provided by the private sector, the economy depends to a large extent on the provision of efficient public services. Technical cooperation activities in this sector will upgrade the performance of various departments as well as improve the delivery systems;

(d) Human resources development. UNDP assistance will build upon recommendations made by the United Nations system to establish a more integrated strategy for human resources development which will be pursued during the fifth cycle. This includes more participation by female workers who have already reached a high level of education and who will be able to alleviate the problem of scarcity of national manpower.

III. MANAGEMENT OF PROGRAMME IMPLEMENTATION

6. Implementation and management arrangements are set out clearly in the country programme as follows:

(a) Formulation. In formulating UNDP support, particular attention will be paid to the respective areas of concentration so that individual projects

constitute essential and strategic parts of wider priority development objectives;

(b) Implementation. Timely implementation will have a critical bearing on the effectiveness of the technical cooperation activities. The federal coordinating ministries will take the lead in programme implementation. Aiming at smooth and efficient operations of various technical cooperation programmes, the UNDP office will maintain close contacts with the relevant federal and local entities, as well as with the concerned executing agencies of the United Nations system. Various execution modalities will also be explored, including the assignment of national directors. National implementation will be encouraged during this cycle;

(c) Monitoring and evaluation. The programme will be subjected to the established UNDP monitoring procedures including country programme management plans, progress reports, tripartite reviews, in-depth evaluations and a mid-country programme review;

(d) Coordination arrangements. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs is the official coordinating body for technical cooperation activities. Discussions on technical issues will also be held with the Ministry of Planning, and federal ministries and local departments in the individual Emirates. The resident coordinator will continue to coordinate all United Nations activities in the country.

IV. RECOMMENDATIONS

7. The country programme for the United Arab Emirates corresponds to the country's development needs and aims at strengthening the management capacity both at the federal and local levels. It should be noted that no indicative planning figure (IPF) has been allocated to the United Arab Emirates for the fifth cycle. Thus, the programme will be funded entirely by the Government.

8. The Administrator recommends that the Governing Council approve the fifth country programme for the United Arab Emirates.